

# The Cowl's *Welcome Back!*

*Special Issue*

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enjoying themselves

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# Interview:

Steve Muzrall on neighborhood relations, the administration, and his hopes for Congress in the year ahead

Welcome Back

*I wish the school would be more open about things. They do make a lot of decisions without input.*

- Steve Muzrall



JOHN ENGLISHMEN '03/The Cowl

*Steve Muzrall '02 is the President of the Student Congress. He has served on various school committees, representing the student body on issues like the Strategic Plan and the Honor Code.*

**In your opinion, what are the strengths of Providence College? What attracts people to PC?**

The strength, I think, is that we're a school on the rise. I've had the advantage of sitting on some different committees where I've had the chance to hear the stuff that goes on, and I really think that we're on the rise. Within a few years we'll be up in the next level of schools. Right now we're stuck as a middle level school, but not quite a higher level school yet. We're still a safety school for smart students. Soon we'll be a smart student school-not that we're not a smart student school now. We won't be a safety school for BC, a safety school for Villanova...

I really think the Catholic part is very strong. That's definitely a selling point. That's definitely one of the reasons I came here. It's so strong at this school. It's different from other Catholic schools where there's a priest or two. [At PC] there are priests everywhere and there's definitely a Catholic heritage.

**What are your hopes for the school year, Student Congress-wise?**

I have no agenda. I have no gameplan of things I want to do this year...I hope we seek out the problems that face the student body this year and we deal with them in a quick and timely manner. [I hope] that we don't spend too much time discussing it. [I hope] that we discuss, get to the heart of the matter, and solve it.

I'd like for there to be less apathy on campus, for students to realize the consequences of some of their actions.

**What kinds of things are you talking about with apathy?**

Well, people don't realize that if you burn a couch on the quad...there's going to be some type of consequence. They feel like 'we'll live for right now, and it's fun to burn a couch.' And they get upset that they don't have furniture, and they don't fully understand why. This is an issue we're going to tackle very soon, but that's just a perfect example...

We'll get back to the couch issue in a minute, but first, you had mentioned 'discussion,' and how you didn't want to discuss for too long. Do you think that's a danger for congresses in general, just

**talking a lot and not doing something about it? And do you think it's something the PC Student Congress, specifically, has had a problem with?**

Specifically, our Student Congress has in the past. We're getting better at it, but it's still a problem. When you raise an issue, it becomes everyone telling a story, and not working towards a problem. I'd like to move away from the storytelling, find out what the heart of the problem is, and answer it. I think all student organizations have that problem. There are plenty of people who just like to be heard. And as a student government association, there are plenty of people like that, but plenty of people who need to be heard, too.

**How do you think communication is between the general student body and student congress? Do you think people are talking to you a lot, or do you wish they'd talk to you more?**

I wish they'd talk to us more. And I also wish that besides talking to us they'd talk to the administration. But I feel like they are talking to us more...I hope people are looking to us more for problem-solving. They're complaining to the right people, it seems. And it's our job to funnel the complaints to the right person in the administration so they can solve the problems.

**Speaking of funneling to the right people. I think that a lot of people think Student Congress only distributes money to clubs. Can you talk about what else you do and**

**how important these other roles are?**

Club recognition and club allocation is one of the biggest parts of Student Congress...We're allocating \$350,000.00, that's a huge part of our job, but also a lot of our work is done in the committees. We have a committee that shadows each branch of the administration. Each committee has a contact. We deal with the same thing the school, hopefully, deals with. Little things we've done before in Student Congress: boxed lunches, getting the signs on the expressway- these are small but important things- getting new call boxes down in the ray parking lot. Security is always a huge issue we deal with, and it's such a tough issue because of contracts and firms we're working with. And it's a consistent issue, which is a problem in itself.

**Do you find the branches- in the shadowing, match-up system- do you find that they are responsive to what committees have to say?**

Usually, yeah. Lots of times you'll get the run-around. "Yes, we're working on it. We'll get to it. We're waiting for this to happen." A lot of it is a waiting game...Usually if you come up with a specific problem and you say we want this dealt with, they're pretty good about it.

**You said "past legislation," how does legislation work exactly?**

We have different types of legislation. Some of it is just within congress, in-house legislation. But some of the stuff we want to see more of, because we actually haven't seen a lot of it in the past, is our recommendations. We direct a recommendation to a certain administrative body. It gets passed by Student Congress, and it comes with the weight of the student body. We send whoever is responsible with the legislation with [the legislation itself] and say "talk with this [person in the administration] and see what happens with this."

**What would be an example of this?**

Not to dwell on the Providence College signs on the expressway, but that was something that was passed last year. The freshman class, that was the first piece of legislation they ever did, and it was because one kid complained about how much trouble he had finding the school. We said, "well, pass some legislation." We passed it along to Ed Caron...and we passed it along to some other people.

A lot of our legislation tends to be boring stuff...It's been the trend recently that stuff is done in committees. They'll just go up to [the administration] and say "can you do this." But I'd like to have more legislation passed so that

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# Interview:

Dr. Eric Hirsch on diversity, faculty-student relations, and an "outdated curriculum"

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What do you think the strengths of Providence College are?

I really think the strength of Providence College has to do with the faculty and the students, and the fact that we're able to keep relatively small classes. We're able to have personal relationships between students and professors here. I think that's one of our strengths, compared to a much larger school where you have three or four hundred people in a class. We're able to keep things on a more personal level. And I think that's true with regard to the administration and the support staff...really caring about each student as an individual.

Certainly I think the strength of any college has to be its faculty. We're the people who're here in the long term...that's another one of the strengths of the College.

*Dr. Eric Hirsch, Professor of Sociology, was last year's Vice President of Faculty Senate (President Frank Ford was unavailable for comment). He also serves on the Senate as Head of the Admissions Committee. His comments represent his own opinion.*



JOHN ENGLISHMEN '03/The Cowl

How do you think our faculty compares to the faculty at other schools?

I taught at Columbia, in New York City, for eight years. I think that our faculty is as good if not better than Columbia's. At Columbia, they tend to be more research-oriented. If you're a good teacher, that's almost a strike against you, because then you're seen as a teacher and not someone who contributes to scholarly publications. I think research universities, they have their place, but I certainly prefer teaching at a college like this one. I very much prefer my colleagues here, on the faculty as a whole and in my department, than those at Columbia.

What are the big issues faculty senate faced last year, and what issues do you anticipate facing this year?

Well, I guess maybe there's a distinction between what we will be facing and what I hope we'll be facing. I think there are a lot of issues that should be addressed by the College, and I'm not sure they will be. I hope they will be.

One is the curriculum. The curriculum is decades old, I think thirty years. An effort was made to update the curriculum a number of years ago, it must be three or four years ago by now, and it didn't happen because that curriculum was vetoed by Fr. Smith. I think

it's unfortunate that there hasn't been an effort to work on the curriculum since then. I understand that people are frustrated. They worked so hard on it the first time only to see it vetoed.

But I certainly think our curriculum needs updating. I think Fr. Smith, in an address to the faculty, talked about the importance of globalization, and how we really need to understand what's going on in the rest of the world. I think the event recently, the terrorist bombing, indicated to us that we need to understand what's going on in the rest of the world.

It's a question we really need to be considering. Do we need to be so focused on Europe and the United States. What about the rest of the world? What about contributions by people of color? What about world civilizations? What's the place of that in our curriculum?

Do you think it's the Civ program, the focus on Europe and America?

Yeah, but I think the curriculum as a whole definitely has that focus as well....I don't speak for the entire faculty here. I'm sure there's a number of faculty members who feel that the curriculum is fine exactly the way it is. I just think we need to have that debate again, and I think we need to come to a consensus as a faculty of what we need to do to update the

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Welcome Back

*Do we need to be so focused on Europe and the United States?*

-Dr. Eric Hirsch

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# Seniors, stop stressing and get guessing

Welcome Back

by Kristin DiQuollo '02

"God, Kristin. I'm in trouble."  
My roommate. She's spent three (going on four) years not knowing what she wants to do with her life, and now she's more scared and confused "than ever." I've gotten pretty good at calming her down and slapping some sense into her, but the other day, something finally hit me.

God. Am I in trouble?

I didn't enter college with a concrete life plan, and four years and a small fortune later, I definitely still don't have one. After spazzing for two minutes, I had one of those ever-cliché, "major" life epiphanies.

I like it.

Who cares what my plans are after graduation...or if I have any at all? Senior year should be about carelessness, stupidity, and hell, careless stupidity. When else in our lives are we going to be able to act this immature and be this dependent?

(I vote never.)

"Responsibility!" you may bark. Yeah, we've all got that covered, because if we didn't, we sure as hell wouldn't be here. We know we should study hard and plan ahead and sleep well. But how many seniors realize that come May, many of our wake-up calls won't be of the radio alarm variety? Being buried in grad work certainly won't offer the same opportunities our undergraduate experience has (and for those planning to attend grad school, my deepest sympathies). Honestly, should we groan and freak while Career Services bombards us with its "proper interview grooming" tip sheets, or should we chuck the frickin' things and let the next nine months ride?

Scared you, huh? Just a little, admit it.

No, I don't think we should completely disregard our respective futures, but I also don't think our final year here should be consumed by them. Those of you going on business interviews within the next few months: good luck and have fun. But I don't envy you, and I don't necessarily admire your diligence either.

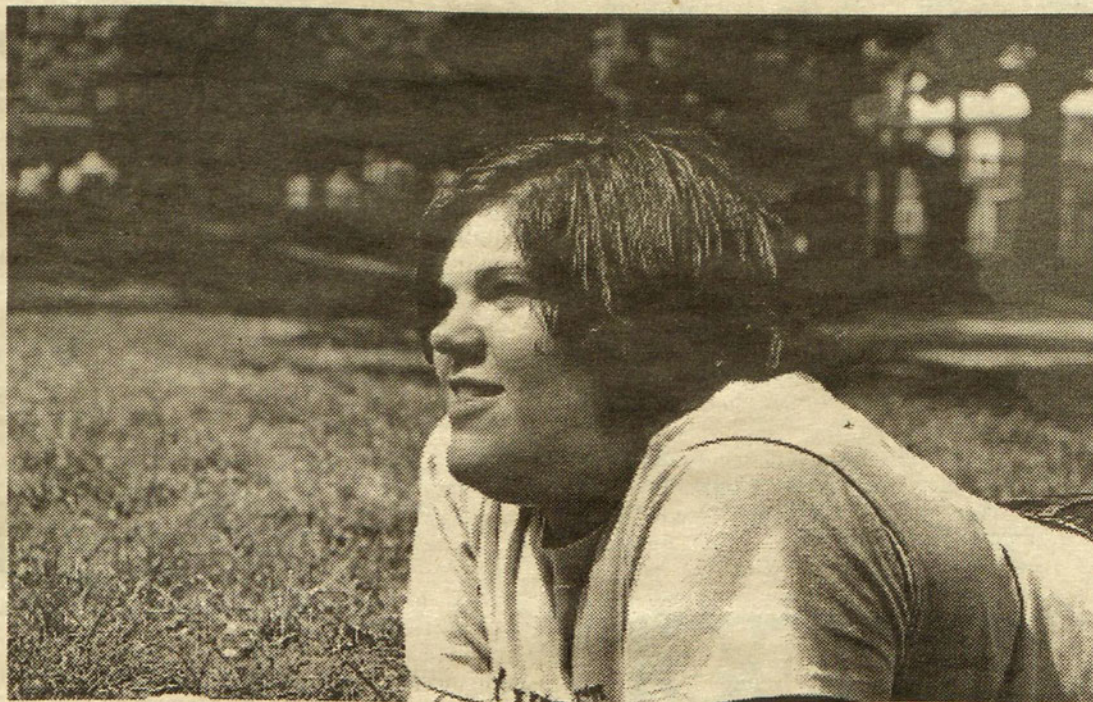
Think about how much nicer it would be to concentrate *just* on school and chill out until December. Party, hang out, whatever. Maybe draft a resume by early February, begin a preliminary job search in April, relish in the fact that you've put forth a concerted effort for awhile, and chill out again until graduation. Basically, we have the rest of our lives to stress about working off the debts we've incurred over the past few years, so why begin any earlier than absolutely necessary?

I'd be lying if I said some of these thoughts weren't entirely self-serving. Quite frankly, I don't want to think about what happens in May, and I don't want to hear anyone else obsessing about it either. So if you're one of those seniors whose bitching goes something like this...

"I have no idea where to apply to graduate/medical/law school."

"How am I going to find a job *and* a place to live in Boston?"

"My parents said they'll kick me out after August."



JOHN ENGLISHMEN '03/The Cow

You're worried about your future? Take a cue from Kristin, and go contemplate in the sun.

*Senior year should be about carelessness, stupidity, and hell, careless stupidity. When else in our lives are we going to be able to act this immature and be this dependent?*

"But there's no way I'm moving back home."

"I need to find a Commencement dress. And date!"

...chances are, most of us don't want to hear it.

Yes, it is fairly unconventional to promote impracticality and preach procrastination, but if there's one thing I've learned at Providence College, it's that convention sucks. Maybe you've learned the same.

So I say relax. Throw on a pair of comfortable jeans (for once), grab a *leisure* book, and find a nice spot on a little grassy knoll while the weather is still gorgeous. Applications? Pah! Interviews? Please! Don't know what you want to do with the rest of your life? Absolutely fabulous.

We come to college to learn, but only a few ever realize that one of the greatest pleasures in life is not knowing. So while some seniors are wrapped up in all of that post-grad, freak-out chaos, the rest of us will be living careless and stupid. And liking it.

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## What do you want from the year ahead? The Cowl Commentary Staff shares their idyllic visions

Welcome Back

In my dreams, I would love to see more recycling on campus, with everyone using the right bins for the right materials instead of throwing their Bud Light cans in with the Projos. It's a good try, guys, but you still need to separate. And why not compost bins for organic waste? We could use it to nourish our flower beds and the campus garden in which we would grow vegetables to donate to local food banks. The student body would lead a protest against the Bookstore demanding reasonable prices and apparel that was not produced by wage-slave sweatshop workers in third world countries. All the TVs in Ray would mysteriously fall from their perches and bust into thousands of pieces, and the hungry students would go back to their interesting and esoteric conversations. And everyone would always smile and say hello to friends and strangers on and off campus! **Erin Simmeth '03**

This year, I think that the main thing PC needs to work on is becoming more diversified, and I hope that the administration will make more attempts to realize this goal. PC has gone on way too long with an overwhelming majority of strictly white faces on campus. This not only reflects poorly on the administration, since many people - teachers and students alike - have brought the concern to their attention, but it deeply deprives the rest of PC students the opportunity to meet and learn from people different from themselves. PC needs some culture, some new opinions, and it needs to look to look toward the future and not continue to be trapped in its own deeply rooted past tradition. **Sasha Gillin '04**

As we embark on another school year, I would hope that we could all be a bit more mindful of the fact that college is not just something we have to get through to get to the next stage of our lives, but that every moment is a continuous learning experience. Instead of getting stuck in the same old rut, I challenge you all to expand your horizons even a little bit this semester. Do something you've never done before on campus, whether it be attending a concert, taking a tai chi class, or opening your mind to perhaps—gasp—enjoying a Civ lecture. The results may just be surprising. **Stephanie Pietros '04**

As I am welcomed back to my third semester of DWC, I am forced to meditate on the core requirements here at PC. With two full years packed with Euro-Centric philosophy, clichéd history, myopic literature, and theology that sometimes feels like proselytizing laid out before me, I am exhausted at the thought of anything more. In case I had somehow missed the message being force-fed to me, I must also suffer through two additional theology and philosophy requirements, very few of which present any other perspectives besides the white, Christian male. A few courses in Islam or Buddhism or in Chinese philosophy wouldn't topple the curriculum that is so deliberately constructed to prohibit individual thought. **Tylea Richards '04**

PC is a small school, yet has a storied athletic history. From "starving" Marvin Barnes to Lenny Wilkens to Cammy Granato, the school has been in the spotlight. Last year the sports program took a big step in bringing PC back

into the national spotlight. The fans took a giant step from the previous year to become among the best in our respected conferences. If the teams and the fans can build on their performances it will be icing on the cake. **Pat Slattery '03**

I just hope that the school continues to indulge in such useful extras. We definitely need more things like TV's in the weight room and in Raymond Cafeteria. I just cannot wait for the Salad Shooter and the Red Rope Licorice dispensers that are coming in next week. I mean it's not as if the weight equipment is in such poor condition that it could be considered dangerous or anything. And it's beside the point that we have such an overabundance of dumbbells and floor space they we just don't know what to do with ourselves. And the food in Ray is exquisite to say the least. I say right on to bells and whistles. We need more blinky lights and fewer useful items. Let's keep it up. **John McHugh '03**

It may not be the most specific or high-falutin' hope for the new school year or even the most original, but it is ideal nonetheless. What ever happened to some good old fashioned love and kindness around here? It sounds cheesy, but four out of five dentists have noticed a marked decline on the kind scale around campus. Smile. Say hello. Mean it even (this one may take a little more work). This love revolution may take a little energy, but smiling will make you feel better, save you stress, prevent burnout, and burn off 50 pounds in 6 hours (so the last one is a long shot).

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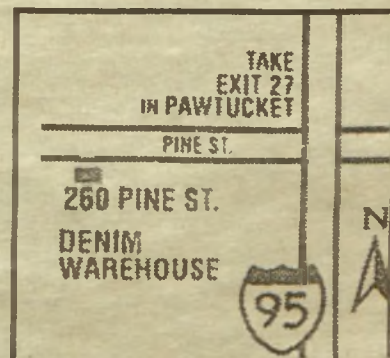
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## Muzrall

*Continued from page 1*

we can say, partially for our own PR.

**Do you think that people think Student Congress hasn't done a lot because you haven't passed a lot of legislation?**

Partially, yes. But a lot of it has been us not publicizing what we do, and a lot of times not following through with what we do. We'll come up with something and we just won't follow up on it and say we did it...

**There was the recent "PC Bill" passed in the Rhode Island legislature, and during the Valueland controversy a representative from Providence said some nasty things about the general behavior of PC students. Do you think that the perception among Rhode Islanders is that PC is a horrible neighbor? And do you think that perception is deserved?**

I think it's a perception in Rhode Island that we have not done enough to stop it. There are definitely weekends when I do not want to be associated with the Providence College community: when you walk down campus and you just see drunk kids urinating in people's lawns and just causing all sorts of rucus of campus, I feel ashamed to be a PC student. Does it happen all the time? No. But it doesn't do anything to negate the perception people have of us.

We're not as bad as certain members of the RI state legislature makes us out to seem. We're certainly no worse than any other college students.

We also have the problem that we're all grouped in one area. Brown and URI kids are spread out. You don't have a Brown or URI neighborhood. Oakland Ave.

**Can you explain what Congress has done so far to help with neighborhood relations?**

At the beginning of the school year, before school started, we went off campus and we had a five page flier that consisted of a letter from the exec. Board of Student Congress (me, Mark Moses, Katie Cartier and Maureen Reardon) giving them a brief summary of the PC Bill and some other issues...It contained the letter Fr. McPhail sent out over the summer. It contained a copy of the *Projo* article, and we went door to door, gave it to every house off campus just trying to raise awareness that it happened. I know a lot of people didn't know that new legislation. Hopefully if they're aware of it they won't be throwing the large parties. They'll be smart about it. That's the big

thing...educating. We did that in conjunction with the Providence Police Department...Truthfully there haven't been that many off-campus issues, so I'd like to think we've been successful...

I wish the school was more open about proposed ideas. For instance, the Slavin changes were given to us before they were even announced to some members of the staff. But our input wasn't put in much to changing it. I wasn't on that committee.

I wish the school would be more open about things. They do make a lot of decisions without input. They're not asking us before plans are finalized how we feel about it, and we did make some general changes, but one of the things I hope Student Congress is in the future is one of the key decision-making bodies. When something like that comes up, we'll get asked our opinion of it. The softball field being moved is another example. You wish you'd find out before the bulldozers appear.

## Hirsch

*Continued from page 1*

curriculum, and present that to Fr. Smith. I don't know if that's something that will happen this year, but I'd like it to.

**Many people think the only thing the Faculty Senate does is approve new courses. Can you talk about the other things the senate does and their importance?**

Sure. We have a number of different committees that deal with different issues. For example, I'm the head of the Admissions Committee. One thing we've been considering over the past few years is the issue of diversity in the student body. So, it's my committee that has sent legislation to the President that we should increase the number of Martin Luther King, Jr. scholarships to increase diversity of the student body. Unfortunately, he's felt that we can't afford to do this. You know, he said

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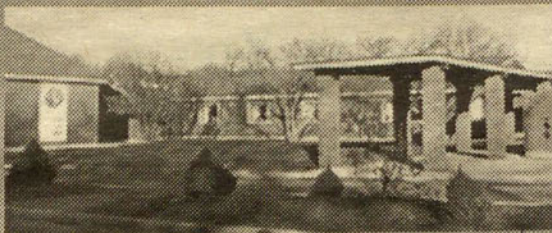
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## Hirsch

*Continued from page 6*

that for financial reasons he had to veto all of those bills.

But that's only one thing the faculty is concerned with, like we're concerned with the curriculum. All the white students here, their education here is impoverished because nearly all of the students they interact with are from the same background. I walk into my two race and ethnic relations courses, which hold about 50 people, and there are only two students of color out of 50. That just makes it difficult to teach that course, because part of the course is to understand the kind of lives different people from different backgrounds have lived in America. It's much better to be able to do that with people who are in the class and can actually talk about it...

I know Fr. Smith has said he's committed to achieving more diversity. I just think we need to make more of a commitment in scholarship money to make that happen. With such an overwhelmingly white campus, you can't really expect students of color to flock to us. You have to reach a critical mass where they feel comfortable that they're going to be treated with respect. I think we're going to have to pay for that with scholarship money, at least for a while until we get to higher percentages.

So that's an example of the other things we do. We also just came out with a Faculty Manual. It discusses everything with regard to the role of a faculty member here at the college. That's another example.

I'll just mention one other point of conflict we've had with the administration. It's in the faculty manual-the hiring policy. When you hire another faculty member. The first thing that happens is that the people you're hoping will come will have to respond to the mission statement in person. And then at the end of the process, Fr. Smith meets with three people that the department head sends to him, and he evaluates those three people, and he makes the final choice on the faculty member. A lot of us object to this. We feel we should be sending one person, the person who is best qualified, academically, to join our departments. I know this is a policy that was formulated by the trustees, but many faculty members object to it because we don't feel as though it will result in the most academically qualified people...

I understand Fr. Smith should have some say on who's hired by the departments. I agree with that. And, I can see sending him one name and if he objects- if he says this person really doesn't fit it here, I'm not happy with the way this person responds to our mission- we'd have a fight over that, but I recognize he has a role there.

### Myopic Books

### What Cheer Antiques

Rick's Records  
421-4532

Three of the retailers symbolic of the Wayland Square area carry a bevy of used books, a plethora of old knick-knacks and maps, and a huge selection of audiophile jazz and classical vinyl, respectively. If you're by the area buying some warm Daily Bread rolls or just strolling around, make sure you stop into Myopic for the great old-paper library smell.

Providence Bookstore Café  
Mon-Sat 11:30am-1am  
Sunday 1pm-1am  
521-5536

Located beneath Wayland Manor, with the entrance at the end of a narrow walkway covered by a white awning, Providence Bookstore Café (PBC) was once the site of the now relocated and enlarged Myopic Books. No longer a bookstore, PBC is a romantic, full-service restaurant, featuring live jazz, late-night hours, and eclectic American cuisine. Perfect for a date or quiet night out, PBC suggests reservations and promises a relaxing evening.

Welcome Back

# ATTENTION STUDENTS:

*Frey Florist (50 Radcliff Ave) has*

***Absolutely NO Restrictions***

*on the number of  
students in the house  
at any one time!*



**Get your friends and take the  
shuttle to FREY FLORIST for  
the annual BACK TO  
SCHOOL PLANT SALE or  
stop by 50 Radcliff Ave for a  
bunch of fresh flowers**

**WELCOME BACK!**

**FREE PLANT WITH  
YOUR PC ID**

**FROM**

**FREY FLORIST  
50 RADCLIFF AVE  
521-3539**







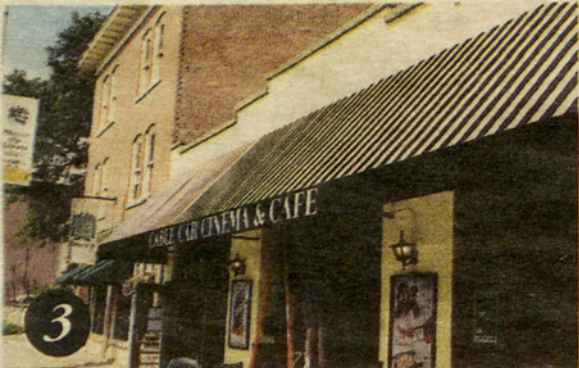
by Mark M. Balas '03

Everyone has drinking stories. While they're fun to trade, they present a few problems: 1) everyone's heard them because 2) they're all the same basic story 3) about how you or your friend/enemy/lover was SO DRUNK the other night. Around second semester freshman year, weekend party stories become the college equivalent of talking about the mall in junior high, or the weather when you're old. No one is rude enough to shut you up, but no one's really paying attention.

Admittedly, it really is hard to keep the Providence experience fresh without knowing the area, and what to do where. Besides, your body could afford a few nights off, and your eyes and mind a little change of scenery. With that in mind, The Cowl set out to find diversions other than Providence Place, Oakland Avenue, and Thayer Street to keep it new for you, and have something to talk about with your peers and parents. Well, aside from the drinking stories.

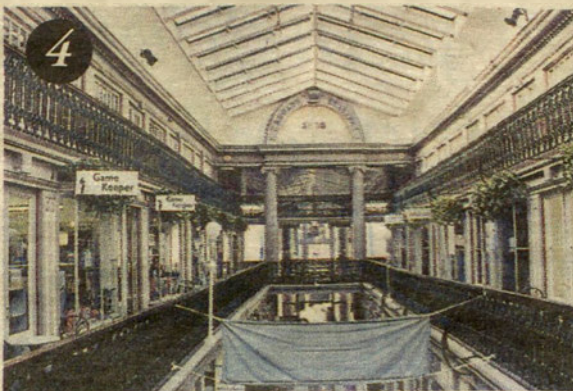
**The Denim Warehouse**  
727-3200  
10:30a.m.-6:00 p.m. M-F  
9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday

Whoever said, "you get what you pay for," obviously never shopped for clothes by the pound. Quite a few makeshift racks and islands turn a section of an old Pawtucket warehouse into a thrift store that specializes in used denim, vintage denim, and blue-collar work clothes. There's also a section where you can rummage through a gigantic pile of used etcetera, and yes, pay by the pound. So let the inner indie kid in you roam free, but when you get to the register watch your price tags, because thrift store owners like to make a few extra bucks too.



## Hidden Providence

### Hot places off the beaten path

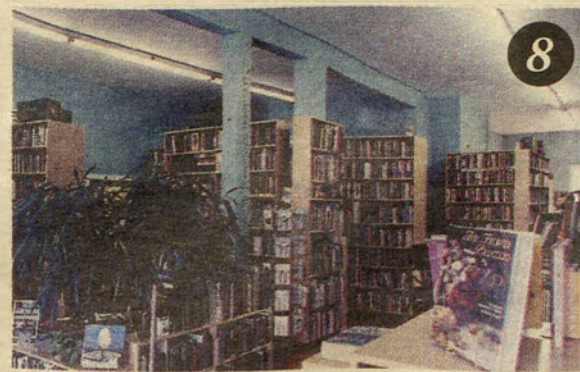


**East Providence Lanes**  
Open 7 Days  
\$2.25 per game  
Rent a lane 9:00p.m.-12:00a.m.  
Monday-Thursday \$20

Located near Patriot Cinema on Route 1, East Providence Lanes is much more than your typical smelly bowling alley. Complete with 60 lanes of polished pine, electronic scoring (with great animation), a full sports bar, a snack bar with a full breakfast and lunch menu, a pro shop, league play, and great rates, East Providence Lanes is the perfect spot to work out your inner Lebowski.

**Cable Car Cinema**  
272-3970  
Admission: \$7.50, \$5.50  
(with college ID)

Providence's other independent, art-house cinema, the Cable Car offers a respite from the Avon's cramped seats and typical snack selection. The Cable Car, named for the former use of its building, features a full coffee bar with outdoor tables and indoor lounge for non-moviegoers, and a theater with traditional seating on the left, and a homey atmosphere on the right with plush couches and chairs. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available, and attention insomniacs: movies sometime start at one a.m., running into the wee hours of the morning.



**The Arcade**  
Entrances on Westminster & Weybosset Streets

While you're downtown checking out the Gravity Games, hanging out before a show at PPAC or Lupo's, or just wandering around aimlessly and feel your stomach rumbling, wander over to The Arcade. The Arcade, constructed in 1827-1828 as the country's first enclosed shopping mall and monument to the Greek revival art movement, now contains mostly offices and fast food joints, but still serves as a good place to get a bite to eat and stare at the ceiling when you're downtown.

**Roger Williams Park Zoo**  
May 15-Oct 15: 9am-5pm weekdays,  
open until 6pm weekends  
and holidays  
Oct 16-May 14: 9am-4pm every day

Who doesn't like the zoo? Even the most crotchety of animal haters will laugh at the wacky penguins, love the elephant demonstration, and want to cuddle with the polar bears (or, because of adorable marketing, at least throw back a Coke or two).

**Cityside Skatepark Providence**  
**Dunkin' Donuts Center—**  
**Providence**  
Open to all Skateboarders,  
In-Line Skaters, and BMX  
Bike Riders  
331-6700 for schedule  
<http://www.provcc.com/cityside.htm> for rates

Are you Xtreme to the MAX? If so, or you just want to show up the local skate brats, take a trek downtown to the newly named Dunkin' Donuts Center—Providence, and show your stuff on a fully constructed skate park within the building's confines.

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